



As our calendar year comes to a close, I would like to extend a heartfelt Thank You for all the hard work our fabulous volunteers put in for 2007. One of the first things visitors ask is "how do you keep the gardens looking so gorgeous and who staffs the gift shop?" They are amazed when we tell them that we are mainly volunteer driven I am truly honored to be a part of such a great group of people!



Gift Shop

The Gift Shop will remain open on weekdays during January and February, closing only on weekends. This is historically a slow time of year so we will be taking advantage of that and doing new volunteer "shadow" training during this time. If you are interested in finding out more about this please call or email Julie for more details.



Upcoming Volunteer

Opportunities

December 7, 8, 9, 14, 15, 16, 21, 22, 23, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31 Winter Wonderland Walk

We are in need of people for the following; Admissions, Trail Walkers, Greeters, Visitor Center, Santa's Work Shop and On Call Volunteers. This year we will be having the treats catered in and if you wish to help out with the cookies you can contact Teri Huber directly at 608.757.0274 or email

jvlfarmersmarket@aol.com.

See the **Big Book of Volunteer Opportunities** on my desk to sign up today.

IMPORTANT NOTE: PLEASE turn in your volunteer hours for 2007 to Julie!

Are you a stamper or card maker or do you have extra unused greeting cards laying around? We can always use donated greeting cards for this great cause, all types are welcome. Your help is greatly appreciated! Special birthday? Big anniversary? Amazing accomplishment? Medical needs? Sympathy? If you know a fellow volunteer that needs a card, let us know by filling out a greeting card request form available at the gift shop file drawer and from Mark at the Horticulture Building.



Earth Day 2008

We are already planning a major volunteer effort for an entire week, corresponding with Earth Day which is April 22, 2008. We will be focusing on community education and involvement. In the past we have had a number of work stations where people experience a variety of green gardening techniques. We would also like to have enough volunteers to accommodate large groups such as schools or churches that wish to partake in the spirit of Earth Day. It is not too early to sign up to be a part of this worthwhile cause.

Geocaching makes its debut at RBG

You pronounce it Geo-cashing, like cashing a check. Think high-tech treasure hunting with a global positioning unit or GPS. Thanks to Harry Merrifield and his lovely wife Joan, we are the proud providers of our very own Geocache site. You can find out more information online



at www.geocaching.com, search in zip code 53545 and look for the name stone edge. We have had 25 "hits" or people who have found our cache so far and logged their find on the geocache website.

Many are new to the gardens and we had hoped this would generate interest. Here are a couple of quotes from treasure hunters; *October 13 by Och* "Wow, I never would have thought to look there. Lucky my Geodad was with me. TNLN. Haven't been to this place in about 13 years, shouldn't (have) waited that long to return." *November 4 by Ge-O-Mom*; "We've never been here before although we've thought about coming down to check it out. It takes a cache to get us here! Beautiful. Looks like we'll have to come back when all the Christmas lights are on!"

THE DIRTY DETAILS

MARK DWYER TELLS US WHAT REALLY GOES ON IN THE GARDENS



Winter Wonderland Set-Up

Special thanks to all of the volunteers that helped prepare and set-up the Winter Wonderland Walk! Lights and displays could be seen in the gardens in mid-October and volunteers have helped significantly over the past 6 weeks to prepare this important fundraiser. Grumpies and staff cut, loaded and hauled over 150 white pines on November 12th and a crew of volunteers decorated these trees on the 17th. This walk promises to be better than ever so come see the end result in December and spread the word about this wonderful and revenue generating event.



Collections for 2008

Preparations for the 2008 collections have begun in earnest. We are still deciding on some color schemes and plant choices but some confirmed collections include annual vinca (*Catharanthus roseus*) in the demonstration garden (120+ varieties) and ornamental hot peppers (*Capsicum annuum*) at the Horticulture Center (100+ varieties). We hope to establish a perennial collection of purple coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*) and relative hybrids. This hot perennial has had lots of press lately with a wide range of colors out there on the market. We hope to acquire, display and evaluate as many as possible. Prepare to see lots of blue out in the gardens next year as well! More information and sneak peaks to follow in future Grapevines...

“spring-starved” attendees. Rotary Gardens will again have a booth and staff will be involved with presentations as well. On the internet, access www.wpt.org/



gardenexpo/ for more information.

Holiday Wish List

Following (and subtly encouraging) the adage that it's better to give than receive, the Horticulture Department has assembled a list of wish list items (essentials) that would not only benefit the gardens in the immediate future but also defray expenses from the very limited grounds budget. Feel free to call Mark at (608) 754-1779 with any questions. The list below includes the item and an estimated value if you prefer a monetary contribution and would like us to do the shopping. Thank you in advance for considering the list below:

- Rakes (we need ten @ \$10)**
- Shovels (we need 12 new ones @ \$30)**
- New tires for Cushman vehicle [\$320]**
- New tires for CASE end loader [\$600]**
- New tires for John Deere Gator [\$600]**
- Laptop Computer for Hort Dept.[\$1500]**

Workdays for 2008

As we prepare to put up our new calendars for 2008 and start to fill in days with events, vacation and other obligations, be sure to put the following volunteer workdays on your calendar. All of these workdays start at 8 am at the Parker Education Center and will run until noon (with donuts included of course!). Dress for the weather. Tools will be provided. Don't "pencil these in"; write them in ink on your RBG wall calendar! The dates are **April 12, May 17, May 24, June 7, June 14, July 19, Aug9, Sept 27, Oct 18, Nov15.**

Special Thanks

In all of the Grapevines over the past 13 years, there has been reference to Rollette Oil Company as an In-Kind donor. It is important to recognize that Paul Simon of Rollette Oil has taken care of all of the fuel needs of Rotary Gardens for that duration. Paul has recently sold most of his business and while our fuel donations are at an end, we want to recognize the enormous contribution that this has been (particularly for grounds) over the years as our fleet of vehicles has increased along with our fuel demands. Thank you Paul for being such a staunch supporter!

Wisconsin Public Television Garden Expo

As we head in to the depths of winter, it's not too early to think about spring. The 15th annual Garden Expo will be held on February 8th, 9th and 10th at the Alliant Center. Sponsored by Wisconsin Public Television, this event features over 100 educational / demonstration seminars, over 400 exhibitor booths and hands-on workshops. This event attracted almost 20,000



Thank You to	Central Vending
Our Most Recent	Dr. Robert Yahr
In-Kind Donors	Fanning Concrete, Inc.
L.P. Tree Service	Paul's Tree Farm
Carroll Electric	
Marv & Marianne	
Bue	
Dr. Gerald Gredler	

December 2007 *All WWW nights are 5-8:30 pm

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
2	3	4	5	6 Vol Cmte- 11 am	7	8
9	10	11 Garden Dev-9am	12 Finance 11:30 am Exec Cmte-Noon	13 1:30 Admissions Committee	14 Winter Won- derland Walk	15 Winter Won- derland Walk
16 Winter Won- derland Walk	17	18 Board Mtg.-4pm	19	20	21 Winter Won- derland Walk	22 Winter Won- derland Walk
23 Winter Won- derland Walk	24 Holiday Bldg closed	25 Holiday Bldg closed	26 Winter Won- derland Walk	27 Winter Won- derland Walk	28 Winter Won- derland Walk	29 Winter Won- derland Walk
30 Winter Won- derland Walk	31 Winter Won- derland Walk					

January 2008 Note: Visitor center open 8:30-4:30 week- days, closed weekends (same for Feb)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 Holiday Bldg closed	2	3 Vol Cmte-11 am	4	5
6	7	8 Garden Dev-9am	9 Exec Cmte-Noon	10	11	12
13	14	15 Board Mtg.-4pm	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

Rambles & Brambles

HORTICULTURE EDUCATION & EVENTS WITH MIKE MADDOX

Winter Preparation!

Remove tall grass and weeds from the bases of trees. Protect trunks of young trees by wrapping. Spiral plastic trunk barriers or hardware cloth close to the trunk are the best options. Surround multi-stemmed and low branching trees and shrubs with chicken wire or hardware cloth held securely against the ground. It should be tall enough to protect branches as high up as a rabbit can reach when on its hind legs on top of a snow bank.

Combine several tactics to scare away animals that can damage your plants in the winter. Shiny, noisy, moving objects hung in the garden along with bags of human hair or soap can be used in addition to commercial repellents or ones prepared at home. Remember to reapply these substances often since most of them lose their potency quickly.

Check your yard, garage or tool shed for garden products and equipment that should be stored indoors for the winter. Liquids should not be allowed to freeze. Pesticides should be stored locked, out of the reach of children, and in their original containers. Plastic sprayers and rubber and vinyl hoses should be stored empty, preferably indoors.

Clean garden tools with a wire brush and apply a light coat of oil to protect them from rusting. Sharpen edges of hoes and spades. Clean, readjust and sharpen the blades of pruning tools. Lightly sand and then coat handles with linseed oil.

If the ground is finally frozen an inch or so deep, it is now safe to apply winter mulches to newly transplanted or tender perennial flowers, roses and strawberries. This will insulate them from the cold above ground and help reduce the fluctuations of temperatures in the soil throughout the season, which can heave their root balls right out of the ground.

Surround rose bushes with chicken wire cages and fill with up to two feet of chopped, dry leaves or straw to protect them for the winter. Cover the base of the stems with several inches of soil or compost first and then place the chicken wire on top of the mound after it has frozen. Tie canes together with cloth strips or nylons to keep them from rubbing when they are blown by the wind. Do not cut them at this time. Wait until next spring when you will know how much was killed and therefore how much to prune out.

Mulch strawberries with straw, leaves, or evergreen boughs. Mulch needs to be 6 inches deep after it has packed down. Branches cut from a discarded Christmas tree are perfect either as the mulch or to prevent straw or leaves from blowing away.

Pile soil or compost over the crowns of garden chrysanthemums that are in very exposed sites for the winter. Then add inches of mulch on top. Whether covering mums or not, do not cut off dead stems until next spring.

A thick layer of straw over root crops like potatoes, parsnips, and carrots as well as parsley and leeks will protect them long enough to harvest them a little at a time well into the winter.

Geraniums stored dry in the basement or attic for the winter should be checked and the root systems moistened. Do this monthly all winter.

Avoid rock salt, which is sodium chloride, to melt sidewalk and driveway ice. Products made of calcium chloride or potassium chloride cause less damage to plants. For traction, sprinkle sand, kitty litter, or wood ashes. Mix with a little melting compound if more than just traction is needed. Minimize de-icing and traction products to reduce pollution in storm sewers and streams.

Adjust your indoor plant watering practices as needed according to the weather conditions. Plants use less water on cloudy days and during the short days of mid-winter. December 21st is the shortest day of the year. Cool conditions indoors may also mean less water is needed.

Groom indoor plants to clean leaves, remove fallen leaves and faded flowers. Cleaning removes dust, spray materials, and grease that can clog leaf pores. Hand dust large-leaved plants with a pair of old socks or gloves on both hands. Put a group of plants in the shower if hand washing is not possible. To keep soil from washing away cover it with foil, newspaper or plastic.



MANY thanks to our 2007 WWW sponsors!

- *Lycan, Inc.*
- *Lamar*
- *EnRoute Music*
- *M&I Bank*
- *Rollie & Audrey McClellen*
- *Sam's Club*
- *LP Tree Service*
- *Janesville Area Convention & Visitors Bureau*

Kimball Construction
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EnRoute Music
Paul's Tree Farm
Dr. Harlan & Sally Edelman
Anonymous Garden Friend
Alliant Energy Foundation
Affordable Personnel
E&D Waterworks
Chase Bank
Ruth Ann Potts
Carroll Electric



SAVE THE DATE

March 29, 2008

Fifth Annual Garden Symposium

\$50 Early-bird registration received on or before March 1, 2008.; \$60 Registration received after March 1, 2008.; Less \$5 for Rotary Botanical Gardens' Friend-Members

Registration materials available in mid-January

